

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Aug 5, 2009

Contact:

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***Matanza y Manadas: Vaqueros en Alta California:
Cowhide as Currency***

Where: *Sutter's Fort State Historic Park, 2701 L Street, Sacramento*

When: Saturday August 15, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Admission: Adults \$6.00; Youths ages 6-17 \$4.00; Children 5 and younger are free.

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SACRAMENTO--California Banknotes! In the 1840's the hide of a standard California cow was worth more in trade than the meat of the animal. These hides were the currency of pre-Gold Rush California. An economic recession in the 1800s was famine, not a stock market crash. Docents in period dress will demonstrate usage of this unusual form of currency at Sutter's Fort State Historic Saturday, August 15.

Tens of thousands of hides were traded for the finished luxuries of the eastern United States like shoes, boots, belts and hats.. Each year at round up time the cowboy or *vaquero* of California became the most important worker in the hide and tallow industry. The cow's hide, raised in California was destined to become shoes in Boston; The famed "round-up" .

Modern California's movie industry created the myth and legend of the "vaquero" or cowboy. Now you can step into the past and meet the real thing at Sutter's Fort! Try your hand at lassoing a cow. See what Sutter's cattle brand looks like. Find out what kind of goods did Sutter get in trade for the hides? Where did he keep all those cows in what is now midtown Sacramento.

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About Sutter's Fort State Historic Park

Operated by California State Parks with financial assistance from the nonprofit Friends of Sutter's Fort. Sutter's Fort State Historic Park is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Located in midtown Sacramento on L Street between 26th and 28th Streets, the Fort offers special events and living history programs throughout the year. Established in 1839 by Swiss immigrant John Augustus Sutter, Sutter's Fort was at the center of a flourishing agricultural empire named New Helvetia (New Switzerland.) This empire established Sacramento's earliest settlement and the first non-Indian settlement in California's Central Valley. For more information, call (916) 445-4422 or visit www.parks.ca.gov/suttersfort ."

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